

Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

Shadow on the Summit

Behind President Bush's guarded warning that "I sometimes do worry about the military resurgence" in Mikhail Gorbachev's Soviet Union are anxieties that the START treaty could be derailed and the May 30 summit crippled.

In a newly uncovered split, Soviet generals are contradicting Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's Oct. 23 statement that the Krasnoyarsk radar is illegal. A report just published by *Global Affairs* quarterly describes arms-control talks between Soviet officers and a high-level American group that recently visited Moscow. An important general is quoted as telling the Americans, including a former defense secretary and an ex-Marine Corps commandant, that the radar could not be considered "a treaty violation." U.S. officials say that is also the position privately taken by the Soviets now handling treaty-compliance talks in Geneva.

What's more, the White House is studying a warning from arms control and Pentagon officials that the promised dismantling of the radar has not yet even started. Only 10 weeks ago, Bush said that the United States "will not conclude" a START treaty until the Krasnoyarsk radar has been eliminated. That conflicts with his desire to initial the treaty at the summit, if only as a "framework."

Bush's somber alert about the Soviet military came a month after he and Secretary of State James A. Baker III got their first taste of its "resurgence." Shevardnadze was compelled to "walk back" (in

State Department bureaucratese) hard-won arms control positions agreed on by him and Baker in Moscow last February. But none of these "walk-backs" had anything to do with the Krasnoyarsk radar.

If Shevardnadze's position on Krasnoyarsk really is being overridden by the military, it could not be without the knowledge and support of President Gorbachev. U.S. intelligence specialists say privately that he needs assurances of military backing more than ever as his political troubles multiply.

According to these intelligence officials, the beleaguered Soviet leader has taken several steps long advocated by the military: a pay raise for the armed services amid huge budget deficits; a marshal's star for Defense Minister Dmitri Yazov, after previous Gorbachev statements opposing any more officers of that most elevated rank; and generous use of the military against Lithuanian independence.

The Krasnoyarsk radar, clearly designed for missile defense, was first termed a violation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty by the Reagan administration. Shevardnadze's candid admission ("a clear violation," he called it) came on Oct. 23 in his seminal speech to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

With those words, Bush administration officials breathed more easily about sending a START treaty to the Senate. Influential senators of both parties have warned the White House on numerous occasions that under no conceivable circumstance

will the Senate ratify START until the Krasnoyarsk radar is completely dismantled. The Senate insists on knowing that the United States is able to enforce Soviet compliance with treaty restrictions.

That is why the disclosure by the spring issue of *Global Affairs*, published by the International Security Council think tank, is so disturbing. It indirectly quotes Soviet Gen. Viktor Starodubov, former commissioner at the U.S.-Soviet Standing Consultative Council considering all nuclear treaty compliance, speaking to Americans at the Moscow talks. Included for the sessions covering several days were ex-defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Gen. P. X. Kelly, the former Marine Corps commandant.

Defense specialist William Van Cleave, who also attended, reported in *Global Affairs*: "The Soviet participants dismissed their government's admission [about Krasnoyarsk] as a purely political act to appease the West. [They] returned to the long-discredited contention that it was only a [legal] space-track radar."

Bad as the implications are for START and the summit, they may be worse for the broad sweep of U.S. strategy in dealing with the Soviet Union. In taking on Mikhail Gorbachev as a de facto partner, George Bush finds the Soviet president accompanied by powerful, venturesome military brass. That is truly reason for "worry" at the White House.

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